

# The Role of Guidance and Counselling in Curbing Student Indiscipline in Secondary Schools in Kambaa Division, Kiambu County, Kenya

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**Abstract:** *Guidance and counselling services were introduced in Kenyan schools in 1963 after independence. These services were meant to substitute corporal punishment which was the only tool used to deter indiscipline among the students. To achieve this goal, there have been several developments, the latest one being the posting of a professionally trained teacher counsellor by the TSC to secondary schools to head counselling departments. However, despite all these efforts, the attainment of this goal seems to be elusive. The purpose of this study was, therefore, to investigate the role of guidance and counselling in curbing student indiscipline in secondary schools in Kambaa Division, Kiambu District. a descriptive survey method of data collection was employed. Public day mixed secondary schools were targeted in the division because they are heavily infested with varied and complex indiscipline cases. However, one boarding mixed school was studied in order to be able to generalize the results. The subjects comprised one teacher counsellor, five teaching staff and twenty students from every school. The sample consisted of one hundred and thirty subjects. Three sets of questionnaires were used as the instruments of data collection. After the study, the relationship between guidance and counselling and discipline was determined. The outcome of this study generated knowledge on how best counselling can be implemented in order to halt or reduce indiscipline cases among the students. The findings of the study revealed that most students do not utilize the counselling services as they faintly understand what it can offer. Many teachers are not supportive towards guidance and counselling department because they are busy with other academic duties. They also don't understand its importance in their profession. counselling services should be popularized among the teachers and the students in order to elicit their voluntary involvement.*

**Keywords:** Guidance and counselling, secondary schools, indiscipline, Kiambu County

## 1. Introduction

Guidance and counselling services have always been intertwined with education systems since time immemorial (UNDP, 2005). One of the major issues in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century has been the relentless struggle by international communities to instill discipline among the youth through educational systems because education has been considered as a basic right and need (UNESCO, 2005). Benefits accruing to discipline are well-understood. Guidance and counselling has been introduced into other African countries like Ghana, Nigeria, Senegal among others as a tool for moulding student's behaviours. Mulusa (1988) emphasizes that, through discipline and good morals among the youth, a good society can be moulded.

In the African traditional societies, guidance and counselling, education and social content were highly related and the people were called to live by them Bond, (2000). Guidance of the youth and in some case adults has been practiced for as long as man has lived. Men and women have always sought advice and consent of others who had superior knowledge, insight or experience (Bryman, 2001).

GoK (2001) observed that counselling programmes did not receive the seriousness and attention that it deserved from the teachers and headteachers in Kenya. They were unwilling to implement the government policies on them. Therefore, there should be a re-evaluation of counselling in schools so as to give it a more consideration by making it practical. This is because students are the main avenue to

industrialization and economic development (Sapsford and Jupp, 1996).

White (1998) asserts that children have inherited defective characters. Their formation of character is faulty and that they totally lack proper training at home. Some have been left to do as they please. Reinforcing guidance and counselling in schools can rectify this situation in order to reduce decaying standards of school discipline.

For effective management of a school, discipline is important and it goes hand in hand with good performance. It is discipline that harmonizes members of the school institutions, promote peace and dignity. It is, therefore, important to give students the skills, besides the classroom instruction, which will make them morally mature, and responsible members of the society. The recent surveys of the public and educators have indicated that student discipline is the most significant problem facing our schools and which occupies most of the administrators' time, (Gorton 1983). If guidance and counselling services are enhanced in schools, there is likely to be less indiscipline cases and the time spent in dealing with such cases will be re-directed to other school activities and proper pursuit of academic activities will be enhanced.

Several studies have been carried out on guidance and counselling in our Republic of Kenya. Among them are the services offered in guidance and counselling programmes, teachers' roles in the implementation of guidance and counselling services, the role of headteacher in offering guidance and counselling services and the teachers and the

students' perceptions towards guidance and counselling services. There is no study that has been conducted on the role of guidance and counselling on moulding student's behaviour. It is from this point of view that this study focuses on how much guidance and counselling is able to curb indiscipline among the student, and foster academic excellence. There are many theories of counselling but the study used behavioural theory and social learning theory because they are closely related to behaviours modification.

This study was undertaken in Kiambaa Division, Kiambu District in the Republic of Kenya. The services offered in guidance and counselling were evaluated and how they influenced or lack to influence student behaviour. The factors that influence student unrest that originate from the inadequate services offered in guidance and counselling were considered. Essentials of a good guidance and counselling programs and limitations were outlined.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the role guidance and counselling is playing in curbing students' indiscipline in Kiambaa Division. The research sought to establish how effective guidance and counselling is in maintaining school discipline. Specifically, this study sought to investigate whether guidance and counselling services are offered in secondary schools to point out the challenges which are encountered in the implementation of guidance and counselling in schools.

## 2. Methodology

The research employed descriptive research study that sought to describe the current situation in schools. Best and Kahn (1992) assert that descriptive research involves describing, recording, analyzing, and interpreting the condition that exists. Sapsford and Jupp (1996) defines descriptive research as a process of collecting data in order to test hypothesis or to answer questions, concerning the current status of the subject in the study. The researcher adopted this method because it allows the effective use of instrument like questionnaire, interview and observation checklist in data collection. The method allows the information to be collected systematically, surely and fully within limited time, with limited resources (Sayer, 2000).

In this study, the researcher targeted mixed public secondary schools in Kiambaa Division. Public mixed day schools were studied mainly because that is primarily where indiscipline is rampant due to daily contact of the students with the life outside their schools and daily interactions of both sexes. For the purpose of comparison, one boarding mixed school was studied. It is against this background that the researcher selected four (4) public mixed day secondary schools and one (1) mixed boarding school using simple random technique. Simple random sampling method was used to select the schools for the study. This method allows generalization to larger population with a margin of error that is statistically determinable. In simple random sampling, every sample of a given size in the accessible population has an equal chance of being selected. There is only one teacher counsellor in every school, so she or he was picked for the study. Only students in form three (3) class were selected

using systematic sampling techniques in order to ensure equal chances of students being selected. A number of teaching staffs who comprised the sample were selected using simple sampling method (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003). The intended sample comprised of one hundred and thirty (130) subjects who were distributed as follows. In every school, twenty (20) students, a teacher counsellor and five (5) teaching staff were picked. All of them were expected to give their views on the role of guidance and counselling services in their respective schools on moulding the student behaviours and what improvement can be done to the guidance and counselling department so as to meet its intended purpose. Questionnaires for students, teacher counsellors and teaching staff were used.

### 2.1 Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics was used to present the reported data. The results were reported using appropriate computer data analysis programs such as Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). This analysis was based on the research questions that had been formulated at the beginning of the study. Dates collected were presented by the use of frequency tables and percentages. The data were then interpreted and generalization formulated (Mugenda and Mugenda 1999).

## 3. Results and Discussion

The study revealed that majority of the students who took part in this study were female who comprised 53% compared to male (47%). The research had intended to use an equal number of both sexes. This reflected the different level of interest towards guidance and counselling involvement in terms of gender. More girls are likely to make use of guidance and counselling services than boys. This shows a need to awaken boys' interest in this area. The researcher also collected data on students' age in order to deduce if there is any relationship between the age and discipline and if guidance and counselling has played a role in enhancement of this discipline. Majority of the teachers are university graduate (78%) and the rest (28%) comprise those that have advanced level qualification.

### 3.1 Services offered by guidance and counselling program according to students' responses

Students were asked to write down the services that are offered by guidance and counselling programmes in their respective schools in order to find out whether they are aware of them and whether they make use of them.

**Table 3.1: Services offered**

Services offered	Frequency	Percentage
Study habits	70	28.0
Drugs	50	20.0
Time management	40	16.0
Relationships	40	16.0
Cleanliness	20	8.0
Developmental changes	20	8.0
I don't know	10	4.0
Total	250	100.0

Those services that mainly point at the enhancement of academic progress dominate (28%) followed by those that deal with drug eradication or awareness (20%) (Table 3.1). Others like time management and relationships take 16% each while cleanliness and developmental changes take 8% each.

A number of students (10%) were not aware of any service implying that they have not made use of them at any one time. This calls for a need to sensitize students of the existence of counselling services and the value they have in a student's development. Harmonization of these services is necessary for the sake of consistency. There is therefore need for the MoE to give a curriculum to be followed by the teachers in order to deliver relevant services effectively without valuing or undervaluing some areas. This will ensure optimum physical, cognitive, moral, vocational and psychological development of the students in secondary schools.

### 3.2 Guidance and Counselling Services Rendered by the Teacher Counsellors

The teachers counsellors were asked to state the areas that they mainly counsel in order to find out the kind of services they give and their relevance.

**Table 3.2:** Area of counselling

Area of counselling	Frequency	Percentage
Study habits	5	14.7
Drugs	5	14.7
Home related problems	5	14.7
Relationships	5	14.5
Good grooming	4	11.58
Lateness	2	6.0
Failure to wear proper uniform	2	6.0
Failure to do respective duties	2	6.0
Time management	2	6.0
Adolescence changes	2	6.0
Total	34	100.0

From the data collected (Table 3.2), all the teacher counsellors 5(14.7%) counsel students on areas like study habit, drugs, home related problems and relationships. Good grooming took 11.8% while lateness, failure to wear proper uniform, failure to carry out personal duties, time management and adolescence changes scored 6% each. Most of the areas of counselling are related to the affective domains meaning that efforts are being made to reach out to those areas where indiscipline emanates as far as students are concerned. This indicates that teacher counsellors have identified that counselling can help reduce indiscipline among the students. However, little effort seems to have been made on personal issues like self-concepts, that contribute a lot to students' feelings of inadequacy and consequently leads to indiscipline in an effort to be recognized. There is *need* to intensify these services in order to enhance a holistic growth of an individual student.

### 3.3 Challenges Encountered in the Implementation of Guidance and Counselling in Schools

**Table 3.3:** Students' view on challenges facing guidance and counseling

Challenges	Response	Percentage
The role of guidance and counselling is not well understood	20	24.0
Students don't seem to be interested in counselling	20	24.0
Teachers are forced to take part in counselling activities	15	18.0
There is no specific time for counselling	15	18.0
Teachers lack counselling skills	14	17.0
Total	84	100.0

The student respondents were required to give their views concerning the challenges that are faced in the implementation of guidance and counselling services in their schools.

**Table 3.4:** Students' responses on challenges facing guidance and counselling

The challenges facing guidance and counselling services according to the students are different (Table 3.4).

**Table 3.4:** Challenges facing guidance and counselling

Challenges facing guidance and counselling	Response	percentage
Lack of confidentiality	54	54.0
Ignorance by student	32	32.0
Lack of time to visit the department	14	14.0
Teacher counsellor is not available	10	10.0
Total	100	100.0

According to the information given in table 3.2, it can be deduced that the major challenge facing guidance and counselling is highly related to the lack of professionalism (54%). A professionally trained teacher is more likely to maintain confidentiality for it is one of the major qualities of a counsellor. Students are not fully sensitized about guidance and counselling and this is shown by the 32% that represent students' ignorance.

Other challenges that score 15.4% each are lack of support from other teachers, having counselling duties imposed on others and lack of physical facilities for counselling. All these handicap the implementation of guidance and counselling services. For the implementation of counselling services to be effective in our schools, there should be more than one teacher counsellors in a school so as to reach out to more students. Other teachers need to be informed about the need to be involved in counselling. They can also be trained so as to feel adequate to assist. Facilities required for counselling need to be enhanced in order to create a conducive environments for counselling.

**Table 3.5:** Teachers' responses on challenges facing guidance and counseling

Challenges	Response	Percentage
The role of guidance and counselling is not well understood	20	24.0
Students don't seem to be interested in counselling	20	24.0
Teachers are forced to take part in counselling activities	15	18.0
There is no specific time for counselling	15	18.0
Teachers lack counselling skills	14	17.0
Total	84	100.0

The data indicate that both teachers and students do not understand the importance of counselling in schools, a factor that contributes to their passive participation. This is confirmed by the 24% scored in the teacher's responses to the effect that counselling is not well understood. Imposition of counselling duties achieved 24% as well as the fact that there is no time for counselling. The fact that teachers lack counselling skills scored 17%. This shows great need for training as well as marketing counselling services to the teachers so as to encourage their involvement and avoid imposition. There should be specific time for counselling in order to enhance preparedness both for teachers and the students. If more teachers are involved in counselling, then counselling would be made accessible to all hence desired behaviours will be encouraged.

#### 4. Conclusion and Recommendations

According to the findings of the study, there is a department of guidance and counselling in every school which is headed by a teacher counsellor. These counsellors are trained teachers with little or no training in counselling. They were appointed by the head teachers subjectively just to fulfil the Ministry of Education's requirement. The teacher counsellors also lack experience in counselling and this denies them the confidence that is prerogative in counselling. However, the administration is supportive to guidance and counselling departments in all areas ways except in financial obligations especially paying for guest speakers or experts.

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